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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL CONCERNING THE SITUATION IN ABKHAZIA, GEORGIA

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Further to my reports of 6 and 16 June 1994 concerning the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia (S/1994/529/Add.1 and S/1994/725), the present report is submitted in accordance with the requests contained in the letter dated 16 June 1994 from the President of the Security Council (S/1994/714) and in Security Council resolution 934 (1994) of 30 June 1994.

2. As also requested by the Security Council, consultations have continued with the Government of Georgia, the Abkhaz authorities, representatives of the Russian Federation and of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) peace-keeping force in order to reach clear understandings on specific points relevant to the Council's decision to amend the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) and to increase its strength.

3. In the course of these consultations, the two parties as well as the representatives of the Russian Federation and of the CIS peace-keeping force reiterated their support for the continued and expanded presence of UNOMIG and gave preliminary agreement to its proposed mandate as outlined in my report of 6 June (S/1994/529/Add.1, para. 7). The representatives of the CIS peace-keeping force further reaffirmed their intention to seek close cooperation and coordination with an expanded UNOMIG.

II. MANDATE AND TASKS

4. On the basis of these consultations and assurances, and in the light of the tasks envisaged for United Nations military observers in the Agreement on a Cease-fire and Separation of Forces (hereinafter referred to as "the Agreement"), signed in Moscow on 14 May 1994 (S/1994/583 and Corr.1, annex I), I am now in a position to propose to the Security Council the tasks which, should the Council so decide, an expanded UNOMIG would undertake and its concept of operations.

5. It is proposed that UNOMIG undertake the following tasks:

(a) Monitor and verify the implementation of the Agreement;

(b) Observe the operation of the CIS peace-keeping force within the framework of the Agreement;

(c) Verify, through observation and patrolling, that troops do not remain in or re-enter the security zone and that heavy military equipment does not remain or is not reintroduced in the security zone or the restricted-weapons zone;

(d) Monitor the storage areas for heavy military equipment withdrawn from the security zone and restricted weapons zone;

(e) Monitor the withdrawal of troops of the Republic of Georgia from the Kodori valley to places beyond the frontiers of Abkhazia;

(f) Patrol regularly the Kodori valley;

(g) Investigate, at the request of either party or the CIS peace-keeping force or on its own initiative, reported or alleged violations of the Agreement and attempt to resolve such incidents.

6. It will be recalled that the Protocol to the Agreement provided, inter alia, that the CIS peace-keeping force would "exert its best efforts to maintain the cease-fire and to see that it is scrupulously observed ... It shall supervise the implementation of the Agreement and the Protocol thereto with regard to the security zone". In the light of these and other provisions of the Agreement, it is envisaged that the CIS peace-keeping force would be undertaking, in accordance with its mandate under the Agreement, tasks parallel to the tasks of UNOMIG outlined in paragraph 5 (a), (c), (e) and (f) above. It should be pointed out that the operation of the CIS peace-keeping force will be limited to the security zone, the Kodori valley and the coastal waters and the airspace of the restricted-weapons zone (see S/1994/529/Add.1, para. 5). UNOMIG, on the other hand, would operate in the security zone, the restricted-weapons zone, the Kodori valley and, as agreed by the parties, any other area necessary for it to fulfil its mandate.

III. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

7. At present, UNOMIG continues to fulfil its tasks as mandated by the Security Council in its resolution 881 (1993) of 4 November 1993. Its strength as of 12 July 1994 is 39 military observers. Deployment to the mission of its authorized strength of 55 military observers should be complete by the end of July. The Chief Military Observer has established two sector headquarters, in Gali and Zugdidi.

8. Members of the Security Council will recall that, on 5 February 1994, I dispatched a technical mission to the area to study the modalities of deploying a possible United Nations peace-keeping operation under the two options

described in paragraph 22 of my report of 25 January 1994 (S/1994/80). Although, owing to limitations on its movement and access, the team was not able to produce a detailed plan for either option, some of its findings have proved pertinent for developing the operational plan contained in the present report. In determining this plan and the deployment of UNOMIG, the concept of operations of the CIS peace-keeping force, to the extent information has been provided, has been taken into consideration.

9. Should the Security Council approve the tasks proposed for UNOMIG in paragraph 5 above, they would be carried out by an expanded UNOMIG, which would remain under the command of the United Nations, vested in the Secretary-General under the authority of the Security Council. Command and control in the field would be exercised by the Chief Military Observer, who would continue to report to the Secretary-General, in particular, on the implementation of the Agreement, any violations and their investigation by UNOMIG, as well as other relevant developments. Furthermore, UNOMIG, by its presence in the area, would contribute to conditions conducive to the safe and orderly return of refugees and displaced persons.

10. UNOMIG would maintain its headquarters in Sukhumi and would establish three sector headquarters - in Sukhumi, Gali and Zugdidi - and a liaison office in Tbilisi (see the map annexed to the present report).

11. To perform its monitoring functions effectively, UNOMIG would need a combination of static teams and mobile patrols. It is envisaged that three mobile patrols would be required in Sukhumi sector to patrol the Kodori valley, monitor the weapons-storage site of the Abkhaz side and carry out investigations outside the security and weapons limitation zones. Gali and Zugdidi sectors would require a total of six static teams and six mobile patrols. Depending on requirements on the ground, those teams will be deployed either with pivotal checkpoints of the CIS peace-keeping force or with its battalion headquarters. They will patrol and carry out investigations within the security and weapons-limitation zones and monitor the weapons-storage site of the Georgian side. This organization should be flexible enough to allow adaptation to possible changes in the plans of the CIS peace-keeping force. Helicopter patrols would be conducted of mountainous and less accessible areas.

12. In order to undertake the above tasks in accordance with the concept of operations described, it is envisaged that UNOMIG would require a total strength of 136 military personnel, including the necessary military medical personnel, supported by international and local civilian staff. It should be noted that, owing to the difficult conditions on the ground, the degraded state of the infrastructure, lack of local personnel with the requisite skills and the paucity of necessary services, the number of international support staff required would be considerably larger than usual.

13. It is essential that military observers of UNOMIG have full freedom of movement and access to communications and inspection and enjoy other rights necessary for the performance of their tasks. In this regard, both parties have given assurances that UNOMIG would be accorded the freedom of movement required in the discharge of its mandate. UNOMIG and its personnel would also have to be granted all relevant privileges and immunities provided by the Convention on the

Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations. A status-of-mission agreement with Georgia, and necessary arrangements with the Abkhaz authorities, would therefore be finalized to enable UNOMIG to function effectively. As Sochi, in the Russian Federation, would be a major point of entry for personnel, matériel and supplies of the Mission, appropriate arrangements with the Russian Federation would also have to be made.

IV. COOPERATION AND COORDINATION BETWEEN UNOMIG AND THE CIS PEACE-KEEPING FORCE

14. UNOMIG would operate independently of but in close cooperation and coordination with the CIS peace-keeping force. UNOMIG also would maintain close contacts with both parties and military contingents of the Russian Federation in the zone of conflict.

15. Within the limited resources available so far to UNOMIG to establish liaison with the CIS peace-keeping force operations already in progress, the two forces have started operational cooperation. The CIS peace-keeping force has established a CIS Joint Command headquarters in Sukhumi and zonal headquarters in Gali and Zugdidi. They have completed their deployment and have established checkpoints throughout the security zone. CIS troops continue mine-clearing operations in the area of their deployment. The CIS peace-keeping force has also commenced monitoring of coastal waters and airspace within the security zone and the restricted-weapons zone.

16. The cooperation and coordination between UNOMIG and the CIS peace-keeping force would be maintained at four levels: force headquarters, sector zone headquarters, UNOMIG monitoring team with CIS battalion, and UNOMIG patrol with CIS patrols, checkpoints, etc. On the first two levels cooperation and coordination would be ensured both through regular weekly meetings as well as daily operational contacts, and on the second two levels through daily operational contacts. On all four levels, UNOMIG and the CIS peace-keeping force would be obliged to keep each other informed on positions, patrols and operational plans. All operational matters would in principle be resolved at the lowest level possible and referred up the chain of command only if agreement could not be reached at the lower level.

17. Decisions affecting both UNOMIG and the CIS peace-keeping force would be made through consultation. Investigations in the security zone and in the Kodori valley will be carried out by joint investigation teams which will be headed by UNOMIG representatives and with the participation of representatives of the CIS peace-keeping force. Elsewhere in the area of operation, investigation will be carried out by UNOMIG. Should UNOMIG and the CIS peace-keeping force not be able to reach an agreed conclusion, each commander would report his findings, noting the lack of agreement, to his headquarters for resolution at the political level.

18. Should a joint commission be established by the two parties and the CIS peace-keeping force, UNOMIG representatives would participate in its meetings. These meetings would be chaired by a representative of the CIS peace-keeping

force except in matters concerned with reported or alleged violations of the Agreement, in which case a UNOMIG representative would take the chair.

19. While, in keeping with established peace-keeping practice, the host authorities are responsible for the safety of UNOMIG personnel, the representatives of the CIS peace-keeping force have reaffirmed that the force, within its area of deployment, would take appropriate measures to ensure the safety of UNOMIG personnel. Further, should the CIS peace-keeping force find it necessary to enter into self-defensive military actions, its forces will ensure the safety of UNOMIG and other United Nations personnel.

20. Should the Security Council decide to authorize UNOMIG's new and expanded mandate, I intend to send a letter to the President of the Council of CIS defining the respective roles and responsibilities of UNOMIG and the CIS peace-keeping force.

V. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

21. The situation on the ground is relatively calm and has improved with the arrival of the CIS peace-keeping force in the area. The situation in the Kodori valley, however, remains tense.

22. Unconfirmed reports from the area indicate that Georgian and Abkhaz sides have completed the withdrawal of troops and heavy military equipment from their respective sides of the security zone under the supervision of the CIS peace-keeping force, in accordance with the 14 May Agreement. Owing to the limitations of its present mandate, UNOMIG has been unable to verify the precise details of the withdrawal. Weapons-storage sites have also been selected.

23. Preparations are proceeding for the start of the programme of voluntary return of refugees and displaced persons, as agreed by the parties. The operational phase, beginning with the registration of those wishing to return, is likely to commence within the next fortnight. Taking into account the clearing process agreed by the parties, the first repatriation movement assisted by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) could take place early in September. In the meantime, according to reports, some spontaneous return continues. Although it has not been possible to verify independently the extent of this movement, it apparently increased during the period leading up to and immediately after the deployment of the CIS peace-keeping force. This spontaneous return, however, has led to a corresponding increase in the number of mine accidents. The problem of mines in the Gali region is reported to be particularly serious.

24. As large-scale spontaneous returns evidently put a strain on the local situation and infrastructure and since such returnees are not covered by the procedures and guarantees agreed upon between the parties under the quadripartite agreement of 4 April 1994 (S/1994/397, annex II), all efforts are being made to commence the organized return process as soon as possible. As agreed by the parties, this process for which UNHCR is the lead agency, necessarily requires a minimum period of time to reach the operational stage. One important factor affecting the process is obtaining the necessary funds,

which are urgently needed to purchase and transport relief and rehabilitation assistance and to bring the staff and administrative support to the level necessary to manage the operation satisfactorily. In the meantime, transportation, transit and reception facilities have been identified and are being prepared. Repatriation staff will be in place in the coming days. The World Food Programme (WFP) is stockpiling initial food supplies in the region. Implementing agencies have been identified and some potential donors have been approached for in-kind contributions.

25. With regard to political aspects, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Ambassador Edouard Brunner, has visited the area for discussions with both sides. His visit was followed by a further round of political negotiations held at Sochi on 7 and 8 July 1994. The Security Council will in due course be informed of the outcome of these negotiations. Both parties and the representative of the Russian Federation have again expressed their keen wish to see the United Nations continue to be actively involved in the pursuit of a political settlement.

VI. OBSERVATIONS

26. Members of the Security Council will have noted that the Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation, in his letter addressed to me on 21 June 1994 (S/1994/732, annex), indicated that the CIS peace-keeping force is being deployed for a period of six months. Should the Council agree with the mandate and the concept of operations of expanded UNOMIG as described in the present report, I recommend that UNOMIG, with its expanded mandate and strength, also be authorized for a period of six months.

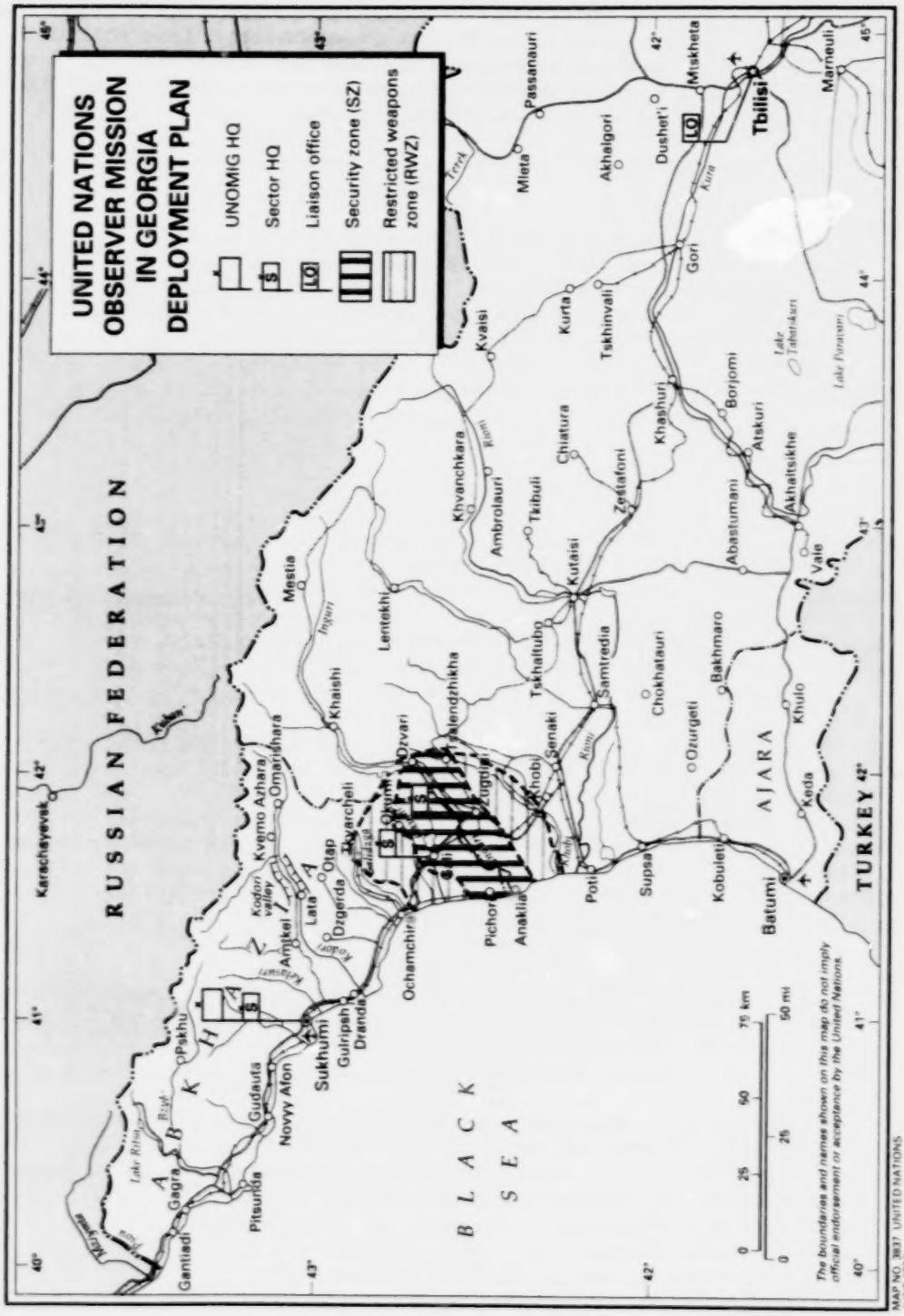
27. I shall further submit shortly an addendum to the present report on the administrative and financial implications of the operation described above.

28. Should the Security Council decide to expand UNOMIG as proposed, additional military observers required would be provided by Governments keeping in mind the accepted principle of equitable geographical representation. I already have contacted a number of Governments to explore informally their readiness to provide observers. As soon as I have received their responses, I will bring to the attention of the Council my recommendations in this regard.

29. I shall keep the Security Council informed about the operations conducted by UNOMIG under its expanded mandate. All matters that might affect the nature of its functions, particularly in its co-deployment with the CIS peace-keeping force, would be referred to the Council for its consideration.

30. Should the Security Council accept my recommendations as contained in the present report, it will be the first time that the Council will be considering the expansion of the mandate of UNOMIG to extend to the verification and monitoring of the implementation of the Agreement by the peace-keeping force established by the Commonwealth of Independent States in one of the former constituent republics of the Soviet Union. This will be a further step in the new direction of cooperation in peace-keeping activities between the United Nations and regional organization and alliances, as has already been done with

the Organization of African Unity, the Organization of American States, the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. I am confident that the first joint venture between the United Nations and the Commonwealth of Independent States will enhance the effectiveness of efforts by States to promote peace and security in a troubled era.


UNITED NATIONS
OBSERVER MISSION
IN GEORGIA
DEPLOYMENT PLAN
UNOMIG HQ
Sector HQ
Liaison office
Security zone (SZ)
Restricted weapons zone (RWZ)
RUSSIAN FEDERATION
BLACK SEA
AJARA
TURKEY
Karachayevsk
Mestia
Lentekhi
Khaishi
Tsalendzhikha
Zugdidi
Ochamchira
Pichori
Anaklia
Poti
Supsa
Kobuleti
Batumi
Keda
Khulo
Ozurgeti
Chokhatauri
Samtredia
Senaki
Tskhaltubo
Kutaisi
Ambrolauri
Tkibuli
Khvanchkara
Kvaisi
Chiatura
Zestafoni
Kurta
Tskhinvali
Akhalgori
Mleta
Passanauri
Gori
Dusheti
Khashuri
Borjomi
Atskuri
Akhaltsikhe
Vale
Abastumani
Bakhmaro
Miskheta
Tbilisi
Marneuli
Gagra
Gantiadi
Pitsunda
Gudauta
Novyy Afon
Sukhumi
Gulripsh
Dranda
Pskhu
Amtkel
Lata
Otap
Dzgerda
Tkvarcheli
Kvemo Azhara
Omarishara
Kodori valley
Lake Ritsa
Kodori
Inguri
Rioni
Kura
Lake Tabatskuri
Lake Paravani
0 25 50 75 km
0 25 50 mi
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MAP NO. 3837 UNITED NATIONS
JUNE 1994